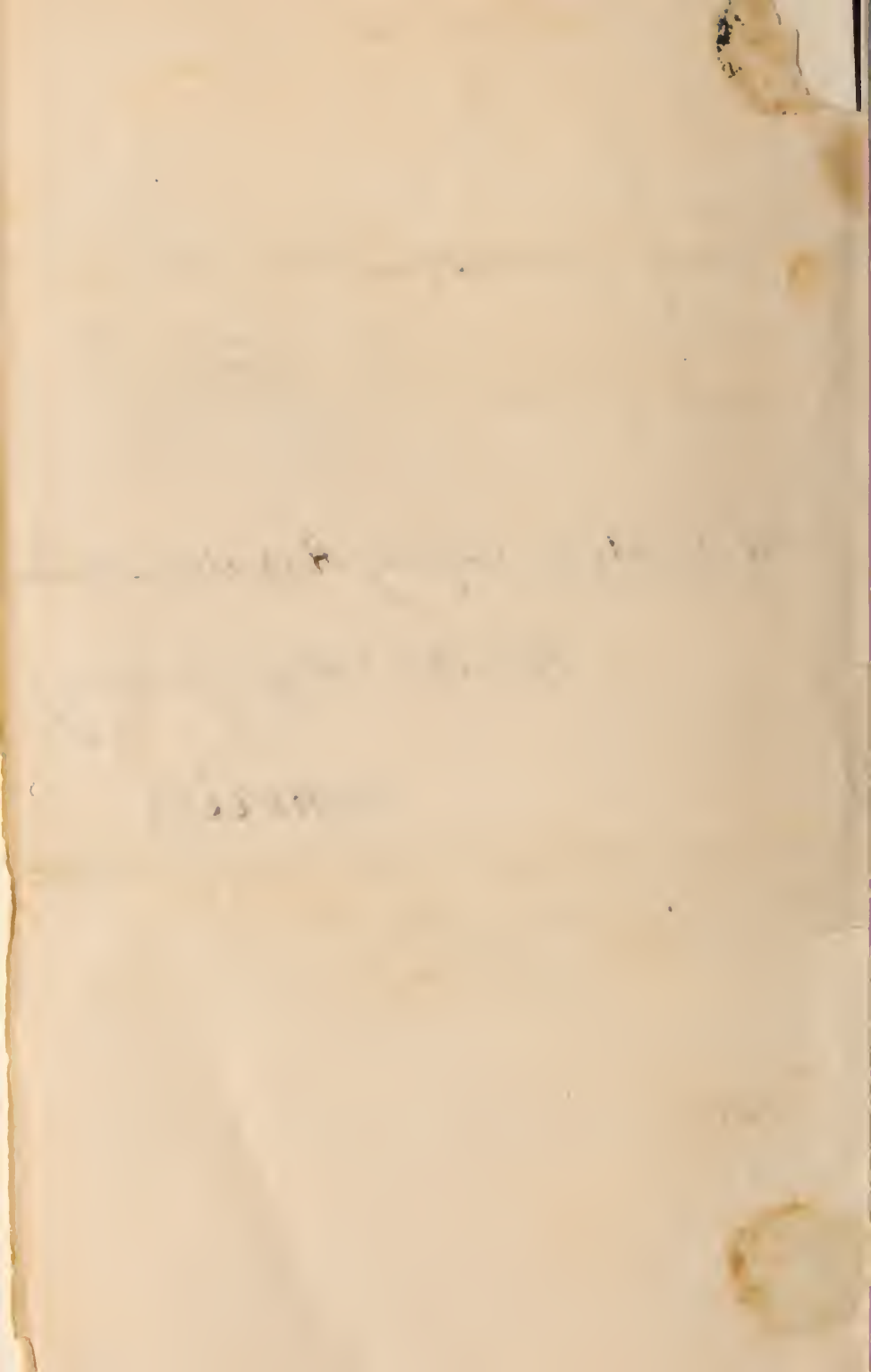


The Society of Enquiry, Respecting Missions  
Princeton College, New Jersey  
America







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# Missionary reports

Vol. 2

1810-1813

## TO THE FRIENDS OF MISSIONS.

Laidler & Massie

It is distressing to the private feelings of the Christian, and alien to his affectionate desires for the prosperity of Messiah's kingdom, to be constrained to solicit public attention to any thing in the character of complaint against societies formed for the diffusion of the Gospel. But silence in some instances would deserve blame, and personal delicacy, ought *then* to be sacrificed to paramount considerations. We had hoped to have been saved from this extremity; but the tone of a paragraph in the Report of the London Missionary Society for May 1823, which we have but recently seen, and which is copied in the Church Missionary Register, compels us to violate that delicacy which, from a regard to the welfare of the general cause, we were disposed otherwise to court. The paragraph of which we complain is as follows:—"Messrs. Laidler and Massie, who laboured at Bangalore, having without the concurrence of their brethren in the district, or of the deputation, or waiting to obtain the sanction of the Directors, left India, and returned with their families to England; the Directors for these and other important reasons have judged it expedient to dissolve their connection with the Society."

Mr. Laidler was appointed by the directors of the London Missionary Society to occupy Bangalore as a missionary station in 1819. He began by establishing schools for the native children. After a little experience, he did not judge that the more diffuse

plan of common and multitudinous schools was the best to be adopted for the effectual attainment of the great object sought for by Christians, —the thorough education of the pupils, and the formation of well qualified teachers to become messengers of mercy to their countrymen. Hence he concentrated his attention and resources to one school and to a limited number of scholars. He was the more encouraged to pursue this course in consequence of hearing that the missionaries in Ceylon, in connection with the American and the Church Missionary Societies, had adopted a similar plan. Some native adults also appeared decidedly pious, thoughtful and intelligent, whom he took under his more special direction. Samuel Flavel (a native) was one; and he has proved himself, so far as our close observation of his whole conduct for a series of years led us to judge, a zealous, effectual and irreproachable preacher of the gospel, devoting himself wholly to the service of Christ. He is the author of "Revealed Truth estimated by a Christian Hindoo," which forms the first part of the volume "Religion in India." At every step of his progress in the plan pursued, Mr. Laidler reported his proceedings to the Society at home, and received, through its officers, unqualified expressions of approbation regarding the forming and conducting of the seminary. A letter from the Directors, dated October 11th, 1823, says, "but that part of the communication which interests us most relates to



the three of the number above mentioned (nineteen baptized natives) who have been placed under a course of preparatory instruction, in order to their being employed, after a time, in the capacity of native teachers."

The exertions, which at first were supported from slender resources, as far as it regarded the native adults, at length began to attain more definitely in the opinion of the Directors, the character of a seminary for teachers and preachers, &c. and in a letter of October 4th, 1824, they say, "In our letter of October 11, 1823, we expressed an earnest hope that the youths who had been placed under a course of preparatory instruction, with a view to their eventually becoming native teachers, would answer your expectations. From your communications subsequently received, we are happy to perceive that the number under tuition is increased. As we perfectly concur in opinion as to the importance of raising up native teachers, although we have not as yet received the statement of particulars on this, &c. yet being desirous to afford you encouragement in so laudable and so useful an undertaking, we have passed a vote of L.50 applicable to the expenses which may have already been incurred on account of the seminary, chiefly for the first year's expenditure, viz. 1823, 1824."

In the mean time, Mr. Chambers, who left Bellary on account of severe indisposition, had joined Mr. Laidler, and having received the sanction of the directors to continue at Bangalore, he co-operated with Mr. Laidler till September 1825, when he was removed by sickness, which ended in his decease. Mr. Campbell, sent from England, also joined the mission in June 1824. The latter appeared warmly to enter into the whole plan, and at one of their meetings

for business the draught of their enlarged operations was unanimously agreed to, and Mr. Campbell was appointed to write out for the Directors a representation of the system, which, when completed, was forwarded to them as a joint letter, dated December 20, 1824; extracts of which may be seen in the Society's Report for 1825. In August 1825, however, before any reply was obtained to the joint letter, Mr. Campbell changed his mind: he proposed that the plan submitted to the Directors should be abandoned; he refused to fill his usual place in the course of education, which was to instruct the students in geography, &c.; he commenced a course of controversy with Mr. Laidler in writing, and at the same instant issued circulars in his own name, proposing the formation of a new school, to be under his management, the responsibility of which he undertook. Any application of a similar nature had hitherto been in the name of the mission. Thus an attempt was made to demolish what had been constructing by the experience of five years, although he had not been in the country fifteen months. He insisted that each missionary should pursue his own plans, that the seminary should be divided, and a certain number of the students committed to his care. The latest communications from the Directors up to this moment contained their decided approbation of the plan pursued by Mr. Laidler and Mr. Chambers, and encouraged it by the assurance of increased support. "When we receive from you the statement to which we have alluded, we purpose taking the subject again into consideration, with a view to afford such aid to the institution as may appear to us expedient under all circumstances." Letter dated October 4, 1824.

At this season Mr. Massie, then



an invalid, and who had been sent to Bangalore by medical advice for a change of climate, was consulted by both parties, first by Mr. Campbell; and subsequently he was referred to by the Directors in the resolutions which were adopted, in consequence of communications relative to the discussion between Mr. Campbell and Mr. Laidler having reached them. "Resolution 6th, That the Directors most earnestly, solemnly, and affectionately charge it upon Messrs. Laidler and Campbell to re-unite and co-operate in the bond of Christian love and fellowship; and urge it upon Mr. Massie to exert himself in every Christian way to bring about so very important a result. March 6, 1826." Mr. Campbell refused to admit Mr. Massie to their councils for following out the injunction of the Directors. Mr. Massie felt his judgment and confidence secured by Mr. Laidler.

The plan appeared to be productive of much good to the cause, and pecuniary aid, for the elementary school now containing twenty-two boys entirely supported by the mission, and also for the seminary consisting of fourteen young and married men, was more than ever required. We have been accustomed to believe "that the grand object of all missionary societies must be to train up native preachers, and that they who best accomplish this have most efficiently discharged the work assigned them," consequently that every scriptural attempt to effect this is the missionary's direct course to fulfil his sacred and responsible obligations to Christ his Lord. Connected with us were sixteen preparing for, or already engaged in the work, of all of whom we had great reason to think well; and who, with only four exceptions, have, up to the latest accounts, in the midst of distressing trials, maintained their integrity. By an application to the friends of

religion in India, many of whom knew us personally, we realized in a few months about L.600 for these objects; a great part of that sum being from gentlemen who had for themselves examined our proceedings. One native, who had felt himself considerably profited by a course of lectures on the human mind, &c. gave the sum of L.20; and materially aided us in other ways; and placed his son in the infant college. To render the six hundred pounds raised in India a permanent benefit, we invested nearly the whole by the purchase of a house for the seminary. This house was claimed by the Deputation, after we left India, as the property of the Society. We had applied to the Society in London, specifying the enlargement of our plans, and the largest sum which would be required for their support. The directors replied in their letter, dated March 6, 1826. "The various interesting facts detailed in many of your letters respecting the conversion of several natives, the labours of catechists, and the general prosperity of the mission at Bangalore, could not fail to impart a high degree of pleasure to the directors. We wish your most enlarged expectation may be fully realized, and we fervently pray, that a yet more copious measure of divine influence may be showered down upon your scene of labour; that the moral desert in which you are called to toil may speedily rejoice and blossom as the rose." In the same letter they conveyed their resolution, "That provided, in the opinion of the Madras District Committee, there be a reasonable prospect of the Bangalore Seminary answering the important end of its establishment, the sum of L.200 per annum be allowed by the Society for its support." The caution, herein implied, referred to the controversy between Mr. Campbell and Mr. Laidler, who had each ap-

prised the directors of the state of affairs by a very lengthened correspondence. The documents from Mr. Laidler were entrusted to Mr. Chambers, his recent fellow-labourer, returning to England for the benefit of his health, and who, from his personal knowledge, would have been able to give a particular detail of affairs according to his own observation. He was, however, detained at Madras four months later than was expected, and died on the day of his embarkation; hence the representations of Mr. Laidler were received by the Board during the month of June 1826, nearly four months after the resolutions of the board on the subject, were come to and addressed to the mission.

In the interim, April 1826, the deputation of the London Missionary Society to the South Sea Islands, viz. Messrs. Tyerman and Bennet, who had left England in April 1821, two years before the plan of the Bangalore Seminary to prepare natives for the Christian ministry had come in any shape before the Directors, after having been abroad for five years,—were returning by way of China, and had landed at Calcutta. They, of course, could have no knowledge of arrangements between the Society and the mission at Bangalore during their stay in the South Sea Islands or on their arrival at Calcutta, so far distant from the field of labour. To them Mr. Campbell wrote. No official document had reached the mission from the Society announcing the character or authority of the deputation, even their names were not mentioned in any letter. Mr. Laidler therefore made no representation of the case to them. They, however, addressed us from Calcutta, saying, that they had seen some papers which concerned our plans and proceedings, from which they judged we were about to involve the Society in too great

expense, and requesting, that we should delay our measures till their arrival. We replied, “the plan as proposed in the printed paper, alluded to by the deputation, was in substance jointly submitted to the Society, and having been laid as a basis of procedure by Mr. Laidler, Mr. Chambers, and Mr. Campbell, missionaries at the station, in December 1824, was publicly recognised by the directors, under whose eye the annual report for 1825 was prepared,” Letter dated July 1826. In the *Missionary Chronicle* we perceived, that the arrival of the deputation in the Eastern Seas was known at home, when letters were addressed to us and other missions in our vicinity by the directors, in which not the slightest allusion was made to us concerning the deputation.

The expenditure of the seminary was rapidly increasing, but we had no sanctioned medium by which to obtain money from the Society, except by a meeting of the Madras District Committee, which had not yet been organised. The instructions from the directors for forming this committee arrived in April 1826. In the following August were received by us the decision of the directors relative to the controversy between Mr. Campbell and Mr. Laidler; their vote, specifying the amount of their annual support to the Bangalore Seminary; as also a new scale for the payment of the missionaries salaries: and all were subjected to the ultimate decision of the Madras District Committee: but no reference to the deputation.

Till this time the salary of the missionary was £200 per annum, and all special votes were passed in English money, but when the sums were drawn from the house of agency they were paid in rupees, and the Madras rupee was valued at 2s. 3d. and a fraction, whereas the exchange for that rupee was



not more than 1s. 10d., often as low as 1s. 8d. This reduced the actual value of the sum of L.200 to something less than L.160. Besides, the agents required that all extra drafts of the inland stations should be sanctioned by the missionaries residing at Madras. This had led the missionaries at Bangalore to draw, by bills, directly on the treasurer in London from April 1825, which bills the directors now declared they would not continue to honour. The alteration in the mode of paying the salaries had been the subject, and (the directors informed us) had been the result of repeated representations, but was still left for the revision of the Madras District Committee.

To effect a meeting, and commence the deliberations of this committee, we addressed circulars to the various missionary brethren in October, and again in November, 1826, setting before them the urgent affairs which required immediate consideration. We refer to the regulations as our warrant for so proceeding, and to the positive reference by the directors to this committee, "the District Committee, which we hope is now in full operation, will furnish you with every facility in this matter." Letter dated March 6, 1826. Generally, the missionaries felt unwilling to assemble, because it would occasion such a loss of time and missionary labour as well as great expense in travelling. Some were upwards of six hundred miles from Madras, and more than a thousand miles apart from each other. Still we specified various important reasons for the meeting, particularly referring to the director's letter which contained the provisional grant of L.200, on which the existence of our operations had been made to depend, and which had been referred to the Committee. They continued to resist our entreaty and every

means we could employ. Nor was there any meeting during our residence in India, ten months after the receipt of the instructions. It is but just to state, that they advanced reasons for their refusal. Their letters we forwarded to the Directors, but the substance of them we shall here state. Some founded their objection on the suspension it would occasion to their labours, others on the great distance and the expense it would involve; and one or two suggested that it should be delayed till the arrival of the deputation. This was the opinion of Mr. Laidler's former colleague, Mr. Campbell; while others said, if a majority agreed to it they also would, and should be happy to meet their brethren.

*Abstract of General Regulations for the Formation and Management of District Committees.*

"1. That all European missionaries originally sent out from England by the London Missionary Society, &c. be members of the Committee of the Districts in which they reside. 2. That the right of voting be restricted to such members as shall have been missionaries in India twelve months, &c. 3. That the missionaries who are entitled to vote take the chair in rotation, and that the Committee appoint a secretary annually, &c. 4. That the secretary shall summon the Committee for any special business on a requisition for such meeting being signed by at least two missionaries, &c. 5. That a decision upon measures of considerable importance shall not be come to at the meeting in which the subject is first proposed, unless two thirds of the Committee are present and unanimous in such decision." Letter dated 7th September 1825.

With a hope of making some ar-

rangements according to the instructions of the Directors, we visited Madras December 29, 1826. The deputation arrived there from Bengal on the 11th of January 1827. We had an interview with them on the 15th of the same month, and on the 18th we wrote to the Directors giving "the substance of our conversation with the deputation during our interview with them, and not consciously permitting an invidious turn to any sentiment expressed by them." The following are summary extracts:—"Messrs. Tyerman and Bennet insisted, that the Committee was already formed, and that it was not left to any missionary to refuse membership."—"That no missionary, nor any two missionaries had a right to request as we had done, the meeting of any others at any specific place for the organization of the district Committee;" "they pronounced the Bangalore seminary as depending yet for its existence upon the decision of the Madras district Committee;" "they expressed strong disapprobation at the designation *College*, and the nomination of Professors;" "their intention was to examine every thing with candour, and report with fairness what they had seen;" "they had no design to interfere, they had no authority to exercise." We believed we had only acted according to the spirit of the Society's instructions.

A friend had written to us (and we valued the approbation of such a friend as Joseph D'Acre, Esq.) saying, "I enter fully into the spirit of your sentiments in the 68th paragraph of your plan, and with all my heart unite with you in my prayers that it may be accomplished, and if it please God at Chittoor." To this station he urged us to remove the whole mission. "I shall merely say to you both, it is my intention to give you all the aid in my power in the sup-

port of it." We had mentioned this proposal to the deputation, and alluded to some particulars which influenced our minds in giving the preference to Chittoor, as being more eligible than Bangalore for such a plan of operations. The latter is a *military cantonment* in the heart of the Rajah of the Mysore's country, from which considerable restrictions and obstacles might be anticipated; whereas Chittoor is in the territories subjected to the Honourable East India Company's government, and is a civil establishment. The deputation wrote to Mr. D'Acre 'to apprise' him that we were acting according to our 'own judgment,' and they requested him to delay making any arrangements with us till they 'should have the pleasure and honour of seeing' him. We were entirely ignorant of this interference till Mr. D'Acre laid their *letter* and his *reply* before us.

They postponed the organization of the district committee, and wrote a circular, intimating that they had made arrangements to defer it, till they should return from the interior, which they anticipated would not be before June; it took place about the middle of September; they appointed a *Secretary* for the Committee *pro tempore*, and gave him authority to arrange concerning salaries; they directed the agents to make payment of such accounts as had received his sanction. Thus our hope of making arrangements for the support of our present and continued operations, in conformity with the instructions of the Directors, and for which we had left our station, and incurred considerable expenditure, was blasted, and we were plunged into distressing embarrassments, without the prospect of any relief such as we required.

The meeting of the District Committee took place by direction of the deputation after we had arrived in this country. Of the ten resi-

dent missionaries in the district, we are informed, five were absent, while there were eight who had newly arrived in the country present, besides the deputation. Before this assembly we had no representative, nor had we ever made any representation to those convened, and although so far distant, we were condemned as having seriously compromised the reputation of the society by *abusing its confidence*, by *misrepresenting its pledges*, and by *misappropriating the money obtained through these means*. They passed the resolution (which has since been performed) to issue circulars to this effect wherever we had received subscriptions, and they broke up the seminary, and dispersed its members.\*

To the exercise of such power we felt it would be a dereliction of duty to yield; and having no alternative when such a stop was put to our plans than to make a personal appeal to the directors, we sold every thing but our books, and that at considerable loss, and paid the accounts of the mission with the proceeds. We subjoin an abstract of the mission expenditure from the time that Mr. Massie joined the station.

Expenditure during the last four months of the year 1825, as per items,	L.135 9 11
Ditto during January, February, March, and April 1826, ditto,	405 9 7
Ditto during May and June 1826, ditto,	258 11 10
Ditto from July till January 1827, ditto,	500 5 5
Ditto during January, February, and March 1827, ditto,	317 2 6
	L.1616 19 3

By cash,			
A bill to Mrs. —, November 1825,	L.200	0	0
Ditto to Dr. —, January 1826,	200	0	0
Ditto to the Rev. —, January 1826,	125	0	0
Ditto to Dr. —, April 1826,	200	0	0
A draft on Messrs. —, July 1826,	156	8	1
A bill to Messrs. —, August 1826, L.400, less agency, one and a half per cent.	394	0	0
A draft on Messrs. —, January 1827,	155	16	8
	L.1431	4	9
Balance due to us,	185	14	6
	L.1616	19	3

We have in these accounts calculated the exchange for the rupee at 1s. 10d. We have not availed ourselves of the increase of salary, which, by the instructions of the directors, was to take effect from January 1826, and which alone would occasion an addition of L.40 per annum to one of us; besides extra allowances, and other items which might be considered disputable. We have reckoned our salaries from the time we landed in India till the time we embarked for England.

We left Madras in the faith that our reasons and explanations would be patiently heard and affectionately considered. Our prayer to God was that we might yet be employed in his service among the perishing heathen. Previous to our arrival in this country, we prepared a letter for the Directors, enumerating our reasons for our returning to England, and expressing an earnest desire for the opportunity of personal explanation. We arrived in

\* Two of the students have been sent to Salem, two appointed to Chittoor, two to Madras, and some remain at Bangalore. Samuel Flavel and another is removed to Bellary; one is settled at Cannanore over a small congregation, who entirely support him, and whose conduct is highly spoken of by a pious British officer resident there; another is superintending a school under the patronage of a pious European at Seringapatam.



London on the 9th of September, and were invited to a conference with the Directors on the 13th. We entered the room at about twenty-five minutes to six o'clock, P. M., and were directed to withdraw at about twenty minutes past the same hour. A few questions were asked: if we were dissatisfied with our brethren, and disposed to complain of them; and if we felt objection to the political government of the country, &c. to which we replied in the negative. There were a good many of the Directors rising to go away, and some had left the room; it was therefore proposed that we had better draw up again in writing a detail of our reasons for returning, as clear and concise as could be done, as our recent communications had been very voluminous. We were directed to attend again on September 24th. On the afternoon of that day, at three o'clock, we attended at the Mission Rooms, bringing the paper we had prepared as a brief or summary of the topics which we were desirous to explain. The secretary requested a perusal of it prior to the meeting, that he might be familiar with it when the subject came under consideration. We placed it in his hands, and waited in the messenger's room from four till half past eight from the fullest expectation of being called in to explain and answer what questions the Directors might think proper to propose. We were then called in, and seated, and the chairman, W. Alers Hankey, Esq. made a verbal observation or two, and immediately proceeded to read the resolution of our separation from the society. We wish not to say any thing harsh against the society. We are assured that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. But we think it will appear from the foregoing faithful narration, that such

a statement as that of which we complain, should not go forth without the explanation which it requires; and with the view of what are the exact matters of fact, it may to some be doubtful whether there has been grave cause of separation.

“Without the concurrence of their brethren in the district.” It has been shown by us already that we had not and could not obtain their concurrence, simply because, they were unwilling to assemble on account of the loss of time, and the expense it would occasion, though we repeated our request that they would meet us according to the instructions of the Directors: “or of the Deputation.” Their authoritative direction we did not feel warranted to receive, because from their having left England so long before our plans had been submitted to the Directors, the society had given them no power to interfere with them. Indeed they themselves never informed us they were vested with any authority over us; they showed us no document from the authorities at home; the only symbol of their power, and that was uncertain, was that on the outside corner of the envelope of their letters they wrote “Missy. Deputation.” Moreover, after we had, on the 15th January 1827, conversed with them as brethren who had in our judgment unjustifiably interfered in our plans, and had mentioned to them various things connected with our operations, requesting them to think of the same for a few days, they made no further reply, but shunned intercourse with us at the houses of friends to which we were invited to meet them: “Or waiting to obtain the sanction of the Directors.” Such sanction we were unable to wait for in consequence of arrangements made by the Deputation; through their in-

fluence exercised over the agents employed by the Society for the payment of all monies, we could obtain no supplies to carry on our operations, or support our families. Our drafts were returned by the agents, although we could quote the provisional vote of the Society as our authority, while they advanced money to others agreeably to the advice of the deputation. At this time we had positive assurance that bills drawn on the Society would be dishonoured if they came not through the agents. Added to all this, we were embarrassed by our having anticipated our salaries for the support of our seminary, and by the loss we had formerly sustained in the rate of exchange to which we have referred. We could not have received money for our passage on the bills we drew, had it not been for the kindness of a private friend and the influence of a relation; and even then it was on the assurance that we ourselves should be in England to meet them if there were any demur; as did afterward happen. What other resort had we than to come home, to return to those from whom we had derived our appointment?

With the last clause of the official paragraph, "the Directors, for these and other important reasons, have judged, &c." we feel irreconcilable dissatisfaction, and beg leave to ask, what are "these other important reasons?" We are constrained to state that the Directors have refused to our repeated application any specific or direct account of them; they adopted their resolution of separation when we were absent, and such explanations as we had to urge were unheard. On the 24th of September 1827 they called us in, and merely read over the resolution to us, without farther stating any reasons. *We are ignorant of what*

*they are.* And can only close what we have already produced, with the following further quotations, to meet the impression such a summary is calculated to effect to the injury of our reputation and usefulness. The same Directors, who sent out this report, informed us afterward in a mature resolution, dated May 20, 1828, "that they can assure you that they entertain toward you the sincerest desire that your future course may be useful and honourable," and in the same resolution again, they declare, the Directors have, "as far as in them lies, cleared your christian and moral character from impeachment." The Secretary, who may be supposed to have written, and who read the Report, did also, in a letter dated February 27, 1828, addressed to Mr. Massie, say, "Mr. P. called on me respecting yourself and Mr. Laidler, in reference to the situation of which I suppose you speak in your letter. To him I gave such a testimony as I believe satisfied him that no reason existed why you might not be employed to serve the cause of God in Ireland. I should think nothing more, therefore, will be required in that quarter; and it will afford me great pleasure to hear of your being actively engaged in that interesting field." And again, after the date of the Report, he thus addressed Mr. Massie, (the same communication had been made to Mr. Laidler before): "Dear Sir, in answer to your note of the 27th, requesting a testimonial to your christian character, for the satisfaction of your friends, I beg leave to state, that during your connection with the Society, nothing in your christian or moral character is known to us which ought to prevent your being received into any christian communion with which you may think it



desirable to connect yourself. I am, dear Sir, in the name of the Directors, very respectfully yours,

W. ORME, Secretary."

*Mission House, Austin Friars,  
May 28th, 1828.*

thus constrained to submit our case to the public; but considering it a duty to ourselves to present as concisely as we could a statement of facts. We are,

STEPHEN LAIDLER.

J. W. MASSIE.

We regret that we have been

*December 23, 1828.*

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A copy of this letter is sent to the Editors of "The Evangelical Magazine," "The Church Missionary Register," "The World Newspaper," "The Scottish Missionary Register," "The Christian Instructor," "Theological Magazine," and "Christian Herald," with a respectful but earnest request that it may be inserted.